

TO BUDDY WILSON  
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DATE 12-17-98

RE EXPOSED SHEETROCK IN STAIRWAYS AND ELEVATOR SHAFTS

BUDDY:

1996 NFPA 13:4-13.3.2 AND 4-13.5.3 EXCEPTION, LIMIT THE REQUIREMENT OF SPRINKLER PROTECTION AT STAIRWAYS AND ELEVATOR SHAFTS. BOTH CODE REFERENCES REFER TO "NONCOMBUSTIBLE" CONSTRUCTION AS A REQUIREMENT.

PLEASE FIND, ATTACHED, PAGE 19, OF THE 1996 NFPA 13 HANDBOOK. I HAVE "BUBBLED" THE COMMENTARY, DEALING WITH THE REFERENCED SUBJECT. TYPE "X" SHEETROCK DOES MEET THE INTENT OF THE TWO REFERENCED CODE SECTIONS IN THE PARAGRAPH, ABOVE.

LET ME KNOW IF I CAN BE OF FURTHER HELP.

CC D. LEBLANC  
J. MOORE  
P. TWEEDY  
R. MATHIS

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For more information  
*Private Fire Protection*.

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quately if gradual reductions in the water supply occur during the life of the sprinkler system. An appropriate size for the safety margin would take into account the existing water supply and any anticipated development of a building site in the future.

**Limited-Combustible Material.** As applied to a building construction material, a material not complying with the definition of noncombustible material that, in the form in which it is used, has a potential heat value not exceeding 3500 Btu per lb (8141 kJ/kg) and complies with one of the following paragraphs, (a) or (b). Materials subject to increase in combustibility or flame spread rating beyond the limits herein established through the effects of age, moisture, or other atmospheric condition shall be considered combustible.

(a) Materials having a structural base of noncombustible material, with a surfacing not exceeding a thickness of  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. (3.2 mm) that has a flame spread rating not greater than 50.

(b) Materials, in the form and thickness used, other than as described in (a), having neither a flame spread rating greater than 25 nor evidence of continued progressive combustion and of such composition that surfaces that would be exposed by cutting through the material on any plane would have neither a flame spread rating greater than 25 nor evidence of continued progressive combustion.

This definition comes directly from NFPA 220, *Standard on Types of Building Construction*, and is used in portions of Chapter 4, specifically Section 4-13, when describing areas that do not require sprinklers. The presence of a wall with noncombustible or limited-combustible finish is necessary to meet many of the exceptions which allow for the omission of sprinklers in certain areas. Type "X" drywall is one example of a limited-combustible material.

**Miscellaneous Storage.\*** Storage that does not exceed 12 ft (3.66 m) in height and is incidental to another occupancy use group as defined in 1-4.7 (see 5-2.3.1.1). Such storage shall not constitute more than 10 percent of the building area or 4,000 sq ft (372 m<sup>2</sup>) of the sprinklered area, whichever is greater. Such storage shall not exceed 1,000 sq ft (93 m<sup>2</sup>) in one pile or area, and each such pile or area shall be separated from other storage areas by at least 25 ft (7.62 m). Protection criteria for miscellaneous storage are within the scope of this standard.

The requirements for miscellaneous storage are within the purview of NFPA 13 and a number of limits are imposed on the amount of storage permitted. The limits include:

1. Storage does not exceed 12 ft (3.66 m) in height,
2. Storage constitutes only a portion of the building use,